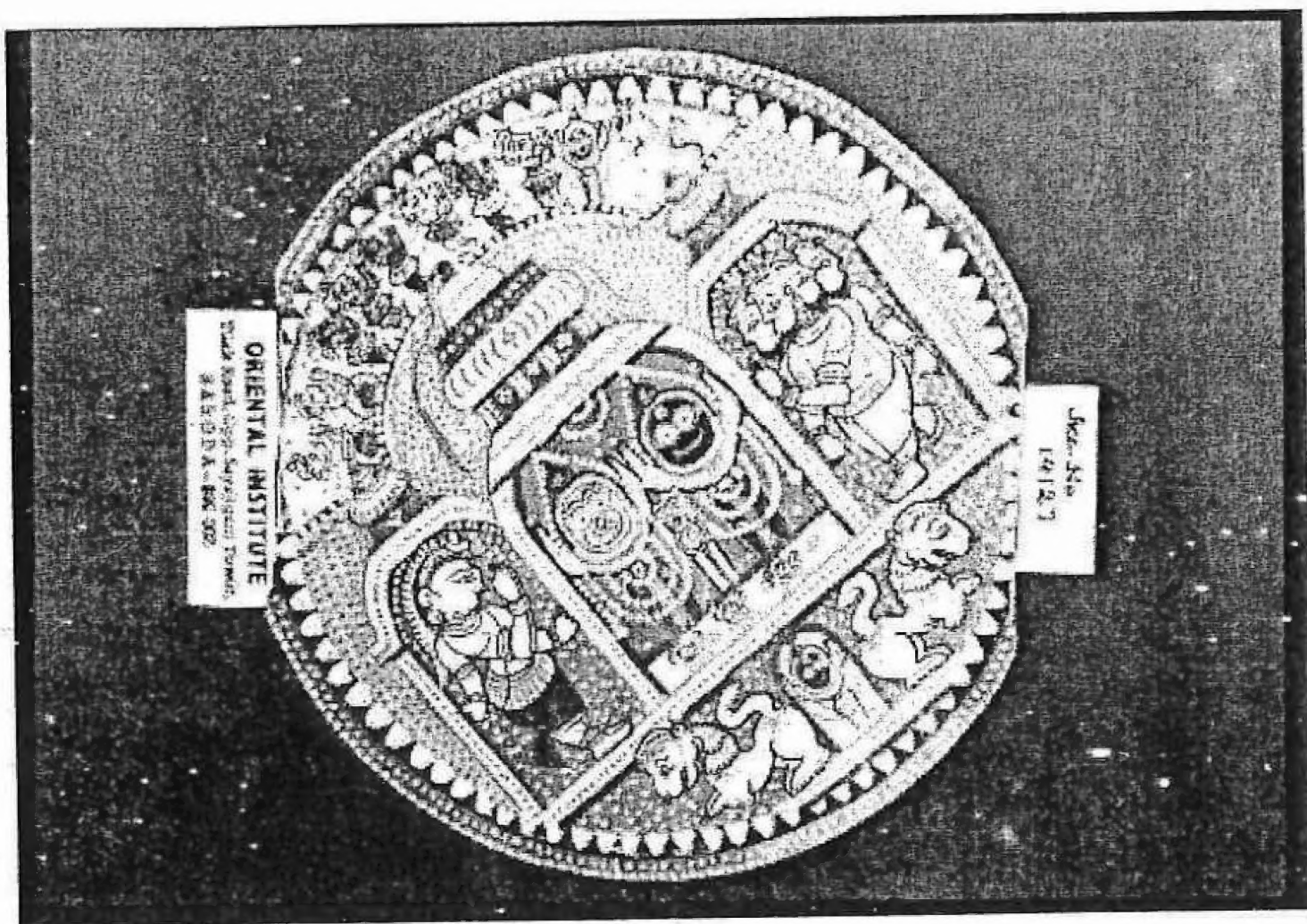


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THE BODHISATTVA IDEAL AND GLOBALIZATION ON THE BASIS OF *BODHICARYĀVATĀRA*#

Ramanath Pandey*

The process of globalization in today's world compels us to understand the world as a single unit, and deeply affects all aspects of our lives - economic, political and cultural. Buddhism retains its core concepts, yet has the capacity to include and develop new practices, which make its impact global. That is why with its concept of the Bodhisattva; it has been able to move through countries, through cultures, through centuries. The Bodhisattva performs deeds, not for himself but for all sentient beings, such as human beings, animals, trees, plants and all other organisms, for their welfare, their ethical and spiritual upliftment. This ideal has a universal and eternal relevance, more so in the present age of the danger of globalized destruction. Put simply, a self-centred attitude is the source of all sufferings - of one's own and of others, while selfless attitude and a concern for others is the source of happiness, well-being and welfare of all - including one's own self. The Bodhisattva ideal, thus, deserves a global spiritual response to meet the challenges of this age. The concept of the Bodhisattva - the ego-liberated ideal and model teacher, - can be the saviour of the present world from its global gloom of personal over-ambitions and ignorance. The present paper tries to demonstrate this *Mahāyāna* concept of the Bodhisattva, on the basis of *Bodhicaryāvatāra* of Śāntideva, as ideal giving solutions to the present-age challenges.

The Bodhisattva ideal: According to the Bodhisattva conception, because of being rational, the unique feature of human beings is that they think for the benefit of others; for all sentient beings are not concerned with their own welfare alone. This is what distinguishes human beings from animals. Therefore one should contemplate, "When pleasure is equally dear to others and myself, then what is 'so special' about me that I make an effort after pleasure for myself alone? When fear and sorrow are unpleasant for all, me and others, then, what is so special in me that I should protect myself not others."¹ What do these words of Śāntideva

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1. यदा मम परेषां च तुल्यमेव सुखं प्रियम् । तदात्मनः को विशेषो येनात्रैव सुखोद्यमः ॥8/95॥

यदा मम परेषां च भयं दुःखं च न प्रियम् । तदात्मनः को विशेषो यत्तं रक्षामि नेतरम् ॥

बोधिचर्यावतारः - 8/96, श्रीपरशुरामशर्मा, मिथिलाविद्यापीठप्रधानेन प्रकाशितः, 1960, and शिक्षासमुच्चय, *kārikā*-1.

mean? We can understand this concept in the light of western perspective easily. In the words of C.J. Hayden "The world is a mess. The world has always been a mess. But there is something we can do to lessen our suffering, and that is to strive to alleviate the suffering of others, whenever and wherever we can. And there's no time to lose." In the words of Martin Luther King, "Life's most urgent question is: what are you doing for others?"² The Bodhisattva ideal presents much nobler ideal than this. In *Bodhicaryāvatāra* it has been stated that "Truly, whoever reciprocates for a service rendered is highly praised; but what can be said of a Bodhisattva who is not concerned with his own good?"³ "Very hard indeed it is to obtain the blessing of the (right) moment (for birth as a human being) which, when obtained, is conclusive to the attainment of the *summum bonum*. If in the present life no thought is bestowed upon future welfare, whence again can such a combination (of favourable circumstances) arise?"⁴

The challenges of this global age: There's no question that these are scary times. Due to present global system we are confronting with two main challenges, an economic crisis, and a failing health care system. All other implications are included in these two. As human beings, we are facing challenges of a warming planet, terrorism, ethnic violence, various kinds of incurable diseases, and widespread hunger. The challenges arrayed against us seem daunting. Śāntideva acknowledged the vast suffering that pervaded his world. People everywhere are afflicted by war, hunger, poverty, disease, and sorrow. Therefore, Śāntideva (685 - 763 CE) explores the aspirations of the Bodhisattva. "May I avert the pain of hunger and thirst with showers of food and drink. May I become both drink and food for the immediate aeons of famine? May I be inexhaustible treasure for impoverished beings? May I wait upon them with various forms of offering. I give up without regret my bodies, my pleasures, and my good acquired in all three times, to accomplish good for every being."⁵ As if life itself weren't harsh enough, humans were causing harm to each other daily through aggression, ignorance and greed.

2. The world's a mess - so what else is new? How to Become a Hero You Are the Champion the World Is Waiting For, C. J. Hayden, MCC, Buddhism, life purpose, social action, Volunteerive, Jan. 2009, Wings Business Coaching, P.O. Box 225008, San Francisco, CA 94122

3. *The Bodhicaryāvatāra of Śāntideva, Entering the Path of Enlightenment*, Trans. With a Guide, Marion L. Matics, 1/31; Motilal Banarsidass (MLBD), Nov. 2009.

कृते यः प्रतिकुर्वीत सोऽपि तावत्प्रशस्यते । अव्यापारितसाधुस्तु बोधिसत्त्वः किमुच्यताम् ॥ बोधिचर्यावतार-1/31

4. क्षणसंपदियं सुदुर्लभा प्रतिलब्धा पुरुषार्थसाधनी । यदि नात्र विचिन्त्यते हितं पुनरप्येष समागमः कुतः ॥ बोधिचर्यावतार-1/4 श्रीपरशुरामशर्मा, मिथिलाविद्यापीठ, 1960.

5. *Bodhicaryāvatāra - A Guide to the Buddhist Path of Awakening*, tr. Kate Crosby and Andrew Skilton, Oxford 1995, Chapter 3 vv. 8 - 10.

The Cause of Suffering and Bodhicitta : According to Śāntideva there is only one source as the cause of all suffering, i.e., “I” : - ‘All the harm with which this world is rife, all fear and suffering that there is, clinging to the ‘I’ has caused it! What am I to do with this great demon?’⁶ It means that the main cause of global destruction is our selfish attitude. Due to this selfishness we harm other sentient beings. Therefore, Śāntideva gives stress on meditating on the altruistic aspiration to Buddhahood, i.e., *bodhicitta*. According to this concept a Bodhisattva thinks “The abandonment of all is *Nirvāṇa*, and my mind (*manas*) seeks *Nirvāṇa*. If all is to be sacrificed by me, it is best that it be given to beings.”⁷ Although it is not so easy but this is the only solution. In *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, he advocates a way of life dedicated to serving not ourselves, but our fellow humans. Nyima Tsering states “The twenty-first century has taught us that materialism alone is not enough. Spirituality can overcome materialism. We need an economic system that can combine wisdom and compassion with materialism, then our world will become a real Shambhala”.⁸ Compassion is a universal answer that helps to vanish wretchedness and brings out bliss for all beings whether they belong to this world or to another world. It is an elemental constituent that drives the mechanism of bliss (*sukhāya*) for all. The real nature of compassion is a state of mind, which is often named as *bodhicitta*⁹ in *Mahāyāna* philosophy, that is, wanting to attain perfect enlightenment in order to save other sentient beings with a virtuous motivation. The term *Karuṇā* (in *Mahāyāna* tradition), is often translated in English, as compassion, sympathy, kindness. It overlaps *Mahākaruṇā*, the infinite pity of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and grace of their response as they attempt to help and support in times of hardship and distress to all beings.¹⁰ This characteristic of Bodhisattva can be compared with the *Jizo* or *Ti Tsang* (Sanskrit - *Kṣitigarbha*) a popular Bodhisattva in Japan and China. *Jizo* is known for aiding those who are lost. His greatest compassionate Vow is : ‘If I do not go to hell to help the suffering beings there, who else will go ... if the hells are not empty I will not become a Buddha. Only when all living

6. उपद्रवा ये च भवन्ति लोके यावन्ति दुःखानि भयानि चैव ॥ सर्वाणि तान्यात्मपरिग्रहेण तत्किं ममानेन परिग्रहेण ॥ बोधिचर्यावतार-8/134

7. सर्वत्यागश्च निर्वाणं निर्वाणार्थि च मे मनः ॥ सर्वव्यक्तव्यं चेन्मया सर्वं वरं सत्त्वेषु दीयताम् ॥ बोधिचर्यावतार-3/11

8. *Searching for The Real Shambhala* by Laurance Brahm- “What we are talking about now is need for a new economic system,” Published by Hongkong Culture on 12/01/2007

9. The Thought of Enlightenment, Enlightenment consciousness. The spark or impulse stimulating the effort to achieve Enlightenment. *The Bodhicaryāvatāra of Śāntideva, Entering the Path of Enlightenment*, Mariona L. Maties, MLBD 2009, pg. 306

10. *Ibid.* pg. 310

beings have been saved, will I attain *bodhi*.' Various traditions within Buddhism believe in certain specific Bodhisattvas. Some Bodhisattvas appear across traditions, but because of verbal differences may be seen as separate entities.¹¹ The Bodhisattva ideal provides adequate solutions for challenges thrown by the global destruction, through its code of conduct and norms of morality. According to the Bodhisattva concept, animals also possess the Buddha-nature, and sometime destined for Buddhahood. It teaches us that as a human being we should recognize and respect their Buddha-nature and treat them kindly. These apply not only to animals but also to trees, plants, and all other beings. We find such example in Buddhist literature especially in *Jātakas* that Buddha himself had taken the forms of an animal when required.¹²

The Environmental Problems: Before discussing the role of Bodhisattva in solving the environmental problems it will be worthwhile to highlight some important features of environmental issues. There are mainly three categories of environmental problems: natural disasters, technological catastrophes, and long-term environmental degradation. It is important to point out how these categories are increasingly overlapping. "Many natural disasters, if not caused openly and directly by human intervention, are worsened by human factors. Global warming seems to be causing an increase in hurricanes and their severity. Deforestation promotes floods and landslides because the natural buffers of the forests no longer absorb the rainfall they used to. Even the spread of human habitation increases the likelihood of the loss of property and life in natural disasters. So, the boundary between natural disasters and technological catastrophes is more blurred than before."¹³ The main cause of all these problems is our behaviour and understanding towards other beings such as humans, animals, plants, other organisms and natural resources. According to medical sciences, everything existing in this universe, matter or energy, living or nonliving, is medicine if properly used, so it is very important to save or conserve them properly.

The Bodhisattva's role in solving the Environmental Problems: The Bodhisattva ideal provides adequate solutions to solving the environmental problems through its code of conduct and norms of morality. The entire practice of the Bodhisattva is categorized under the six

11. *Jizo* or *Ti Tsang* : *Kṣitigarbha* Bodhisattva, Buddhist studies : Deities and Bodhisattvas, Buddha Dharma Education Association & BuddhaNet.

12. Some thoughts on solutions for modern crisis, Ven. Dr. Thich Phuoc Chi, Vietnam Buddhist University. See on Website.

13. Ecopsychology, Environmental Problems, and Environmental Action, John V Davis, Website : www.johnvdavis.com

perfections (*Pāramitās*) - generosity, ethics, patience, effort, concentration and wisdom. These are directly related to all the implications mentioned above. A Bodhisattva who practices six perfections means the person who protects and conserves the environment because he or she works for all sentient beings. Therefore the Bodhisattva's codes of conduct and ethical norms are fully competent to solve the environmental problems generated by globalization. Bodhisattva's deeds in general and specifically continuance in a course of action in spite of difficulty or lack of success for solving the environmental problems fit with the Bodhisattva path accordingly. *Dāna-pāramitā*, charity or generosity, signifies doing something good for a person as well as for the nature. *Śīla-pāramitā*, morality or ethical conduct, stands for the instruction of not to harm or kill any living beings - humans, plants, trees or any other organism, and not to indulge in stealing etc. *Kṣānti-pāramitā*, (the perfection of Perseverance or patience), means in course of doing good for other living beings lot of problems may arise, even in that situations we should have patience, and till the fulfillment of our objective our actions must continue. *Vīrya-pāramitā* (effort), it is the state of mind that delights in virtuous actions, therefore it is considered as forerunner of all virtuous actions. Indeed, "Without effort there is no merit, as without the wind there is no movement".¹⁴ A meritorious effort is necessary towards providing a greener and healthier environment. *Dhyāna-pāramitā*, (concentration), it is the mental state of focusing single pointedly on a virtuous object. It means our mind should be concentrated on single point, i.e., welfare for all. The main objective of Bodhisattva is to remove wretched state of all sentient beings whether they belong to this world or other. So the whole concentration should be on this point. The sixth perfection is *Prajñā-pāramitā*, the Perfection of Wisdom or real understanding. For performing all kinds of virtuous actions appropriate and minute vision is compulsory. This is of two kinds, for example, right understanding, and true or real understanding which are beyond the veiled.¹⁵ This perfection is directly related to ecopsychology and environmental psychology. One of the necessary cornerstones of ecopsychology and environmental psychology is a contribution to understanding and solving environmental problems. Thus protecting and conserving the environment is not separate from the ethical code and conduct of Bodhisattva ideal.

Ethnic Violence and Concept of Bodhisattva Ideal: The process of globalization compels us to understand the world as a single unit, and deeply affects all aspects of our lives. Therefore we are not only concerned with individual ethnic groups or nations but with all of mankind.

14. न हि वीर्यं विना पुण्यं यथा वायुं विना गतिः ॥ बोधिचर्यावतार-7/1

15. संवृत्तिः परमार्थश्च सत्यद्वयमिदं मतम् । बुद्धेर्गोचरस्तत्त्वं बुद्धिः संवृत्तिरुच्यते ॥ बोधिचर्यावतार-9/2

Ethics between ethnic groups indicates showing respect and fairness towards other groups, cultures, languages, customs, and religions different from ours. Faced with the current multi-ethnic situation, it is best to open our heart and minds to make contact and establish friendly relations with each other, behave with each other with mutual respect and fairness, learn from and contribute to each other. That way, we can really establish the richness and noble value of a pluralistic society. When coming into contact with other ethnic groups, we must not act from a sense of superiority and not think them inferior, and definitely not be hostile to them. Even if they do not behave in positive manner we should treat them in a friendly manner and interact with them in all sincerity so as to learn from and serve our new friends. Then we will certainly be able to achieve unexpected growth and new rewards. In words of Śāntideva - "If one becomes angered at the motivation which prompts someone to throw a stick or the like at a person, he too is motivated by hatred; but for me let there be hatred of the hate."¹⁶ On the other hand, if we treat them like our relatives or neighbours, they will also show a friendly attitude, and in this manner we will be able to sort out our minor differences and develop the great equalities between us. Śāntideva has asserted that we should always treat others well because the conduct is just like a bridge of all other qualities. "The perfections of generosity and so forth are progressively more and loftier. One should not forsake a better one for the sake of a lesser, unless it is in accordance with the bridge of the Bodhisattva way of life. Realizing this, one should always strive for the benefit of others. Because the compassionate one who foresees benefit even that which is prohibited has been permitted for him."¹⁷ As a saying goes: 'Virtue is not left to stand alone. He who practises it will have neighbours.' The forming of the Chinese nation was exactly because of their ability to assimilate different ethnic groups by caring for and protecting them. Creating splits between ethnic groups or rejecting different ethnic groups is certainly not to be tolerated in the modern world. "In the face of diverse and far-reaching problems, such as atomic weapons or human rights, we are challenged to accept the great variety of nations, cultures and religions and to find ways for a peaceful, harmonious human society, now and in future."¹⁸

Terrorism and Bodhisattva Ideal: Although the term terrorism as such has not been used, we find this very concept in the Buddhist text; *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. According to the

16. Trans. - Marion L. Matics 6/41

मुख्यं दण्डादिकं हित्वा प्रेरेके यदि कुप्यते । द्वेषेण प्रेरितः सोऽपि द्वेषे द्वेषोऽस्तु मे वरः ॥ बोधिचर्यावतार-6/41

17. उत्तरोत्तरतः श्रेष्ठा दानपारमितादयः । नेतरार्थं त्यजेच्छ्रेष्ठमन्यत्राचारसेतुतः ॥ बोधिचर्यावतार-5/83

18. Redemption in Mahāyāna-Buddhism with Special Consideration of the *Lotus Sūtra*, Yoichi Kawada, *Tokyo Inter-religious Dialogues Christians and Buddhists*, Vol. 31, NR XI, MMI (2001), Annals of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts.

Bodhisattva's concept of mindfulness, all thoughts good or bad originate from mind. Thus mind plays very important role in all sorts of actions. So terrorism is only a creation of our mind, nothing else. Therefore Śāntideva thinks that "Tigers, lions, elephants, bears, snakes, all enemies, all guardians of hells, Dākinis (evil spirits) and demons become controlled by controlling the mind alone. By subduing the mind alone, they all become subdued. Propounder of the Truth (The Buddha), said that all fears and immeasurable sufferings arise from the mind only."¹⁹ Thus all kinds of suffering arise from the mind itself. It reminds us of a very famous adage of *Dhammapada*, "The mental natures are the result of what we have thought, are chieftained by our thoughts, are made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, sorrow follows him as a consequence even as the wheel follows the foot of the drawer, i. e. the ox which draws the cart. And in the same way if he speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him in consequence like a shadow that never leaves him."²⁰ In the words of Dr. Radhakrishnan - "As a matter of fact, the impact of thought on human life and society is great. All that we are is the result of what we have thought. In one sense it is true that we live in a world of hard facts, but in a more important sense we live in a world of thoughts. By changing our thoughts we change our life and indirectly we change the character of the world."²¹

There are three main enemies of Bodhisattvas - the ego, passion, and hatred; and their weapons are generosity, patience, perseverance, and wisdom.²² These weapons have been proved an asset in all times for killings all three above mentioned enemies of Bodhisattvas. A famous pre-Buddhist Indian adage is actuated by a noble motive: "What is the merit of him who does well to his benefactors? The wise call him good who does well to his harm-doers."²³

Nature of suffering: It is very important to learn and understand the various kinds of

19. Eng. Trans. Śāntideva Online, and the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* Historical Project (BHP)

व्याघ्राः सिंहः गजाः क्रक्षाः सर्पाः सर्वे च शत्रवः । । सर्वे नरकपालाश्च डाकिन्यो राक्षसास्तथा ॥4॥

सर्वे बद्धा भवन्त्येते चित्तस्यैकस्य बन्धनात् । चित्तस्यैकस्य दमनात् सर्वे दान्ता भवन्ति हि ॥5॥

यस्माद् भयानि सर्वाणि दुःखान्यप्रमितानि च । चित्तादेव भवन्तीति कथितं तत्त्वादिना ॥6॥ बोधिचर्यावतार-5/4-6

20. मनोपुब्बङ्गमा धम्मा मनोसेट्ठामनोमया, मनसा च पदुट्ठेन भासति वा करोति वा ।

ततो नं दुक्खमन्वेति चक्कं व वहतो पदं ।.....ततो पं सुक्खमन्वेति छाया व अनपायिनी । धम्मपदं 1/1-2

21. *The Dhammapada*, S.Radhakrishnan, Oxford University Press, 1950, see notes 1.1

22. *A Flash of Lightning in The Dark of Night*, Dalai Lama, 1994.

23. उपकारिषु यः साधुः साधुत्वे तस्य को गुणः । अपकारिषु यः साधुः स साधुः सदिभः रुच्यते ॥

See, *Systems of Buddhist Thought*, Yamakami Sogen, University of Calcutta, 1912, pg.60.

sufferings. After getting knowledge through textual sources and practical lives we should contemplate on all those points which are the causes of sufferings. In fact, in general no one, either god or self, is master of all sufferings. There is no law about self or others, the pain is pain either it belongs to me or to other it should be alleviated. So there is no contradiction regarding the alleviation of suffering, all agree on this point. But here one question arises: why should we be compassionate if the compassion is greatly painful? After thinking the pain of the whole world, how great is the pain of the compassionate?²⁴ In scientific laboratories, many animals are tortured with various equipments. All this happens just for the various kinds of experiments to know how various organs function in human body. Can this kind of act of a scientist be justified under the Buddhist perspective? Really, it is not so easy to justify this act, though their chief aim is to help and prolong the life of human beings. A scientist does this without any sentiment or compassion or feeling of love for creatures. Pain is pain whether it belongs to me or others. According to Dalai Lama "In the West there are groups who protest against such kind of treatment of animals because of their compassionate attitude towards animals. I support this effort"²⁵ In this regard Śāntideva has clearly stated that "If the suffering of the many comes to an end by the suffering of the one, then that suffering ought to arise from sympathy of oneself and of others".²⁶ It means if someone having good intention performs acts, beyond the code of conduct prescribed for Bodhisattva ideal, for the welfare of many, then that is permissible for him or her. If he or she acts beyond the custom of his own society for the sake of benefit for others, then it is not a kind of sinful act.

Present Medical Sciences and Bodhisattva Ideal: In the present world the organ transplantation is most important way of treatment in medical science. The idea is that when a patient's organ fails then it is replaced with suitable organ. But all this depends on a person whether he or she can afford its cost or not. In western world donation of the organs is also prevalent to save other's life as an act of love. But according to the concept of Bodhisattva ideal it is because of compassion which is much nobler than any other tradition. A Bodhisattva's whole life is *dāna*, because of his or her understanding that he or she is not distinct from others. A Bodhisattva is always ready to dedicate his entire possessions for the sake of benefiting all. The concept of the practice of organ transplantation in modern medical science

24. दुःखं कस्मान्निवार्य चेत्सर्वेषामविवादतः । वार्यं चेत्सर्वमप्येवं न चेदात्मापि सत्त्ववत् ॥

कृपया बहुदुःखं चेत्कस्मादुत्पद्यते बलात् । जगद्दुःखं निरूप्येदं कृपादुःखं कथं बहु ॥ बोधिचर्यावतार-8/103, 104

25. *The Way to Freedom, Core Teaching of Tibetan Buddhism*, The Library of Tibet, His Holiness, The Dalai Lama, Ed. John F. Avedon, Editor, Donald S. Lopez, tr., Edition, 2000.

26. बहुनामेकदुःखेन यदि दुःखं विगच्छति । उत्पाद्यमेव तद्दुःखं सदयेन परात्मनोः ॥ बोधिचर्यावतार-8/105

is clearly indicated in the following statement and other places especially in *Dāna-pāramitā* of *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. “Without any sense of loss I shall give up my body and enjoyments, also all my virtues of the three times for the sake of benefiting all.”²⁷ Thus the *dāna-pāramitā* includes one’s possessions as well as one’s body. Many scriptural quotations relate to Bodhisattvas offering their bodies and organs to those in need. Therefore, *Mahāyāna* Buddhism firmly supports organ transplantation as benefiting both the donor and the recipient. Phillip A. Lecso in his article has discussed about attitudes towards the body and organ transplantation from a *Mahāyāna* Buddhist perspective. He also discusses the Bodhisattva practice of the perfection of giving in this regard, and the role of giving, and organ plantation as well as a brief discussion of Buddhist views on death and the dying process.²⁸

Work Place and Bodhisattva Ideal: Following the norms of Bodhisattva’s ideal at our work places we can sort out various kinds of problems which occur during our working hours. The norms of six perfections are fully competent to create healthy atmosphere among colleagues. Stress, tension and other implications will be far behind. Our positive attitude towards other fellow beings will be cause of success of the organizations as well as nations concerned. Kathryn Goldman Schuyler, in one of his articles, observes that he surveyed the fit between the lived reality in entrepreneurial organizations and the concept of Bodhisattva ideal for knowing whether the juxtaposition of these two, opposite conceptions can shed light on the effect of spiritual values in the workplace or not. He conducted semi-structured interviews with an array of entrepreneurs who had been practicing Buddhism for over three years to see whether they were using core elements of this concept in their daily work and, if so, how they experienced the value and impact of these notions. It showed that it was very much a part of the participants’ daily work lives and seemed to be a force in creating a happier, more nourishing work environment.²⁹

27. आत्मभावांस्तथा भोगान् सर्वत्र्यध्वगतं शुभम् । निरपेक्षस्त्यजाम्येष सर्वसत्त्वार्थसिद्धये ॥ बोधिचर्यावतार-3/10

A Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life, Full Acceptance of the Awakening mind. Verse - 10, trans.

Stephen Batchelor, Library of Tibetan Works & Archives. See, The Bodhisattva ideal and organ transplantation, Michael Cheng-tek Tai, Department of Social Medicine, Chungshan Medical University, Taichung, Taiwan, Pub. Springer Wien, Oct 2009

28. The Bodhisattva ideal and Organ Transplantation: Phillip A. Lecso- The Medical College of Ohio, Toledo, Ohio, Springer Netherlands, Jan.2005

29. Being a Bodhisattva at Work, Perspectives on the Influence of Buddhist Practices in Entrepreneurial Organizations, Kathryn Goldman Schuyler, the Marshall Goldsmith School of Management, Alliant International University, *Journal of Human Values*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 43-60 (2007)

Conclusion: Thus the Bodhisattva Ideal teaches us that *Nirvāṇa* means to dedicate our entire life for the welfare of others. This concept shows that our attitudes towards other beings should always be helpful. According to Buddhism whatever one gains that is not for one's own advantage, whether it is material or spiritual.³⁰ In fact *Nirvāṇa* and *Samsāra* are one, they are in no way to be separated from each other. Their spheres are the same and not the slightest distinction exists between them. This concept is also contained in following words "It is not for the sake of self, nor of heaven, nor for supremacy among the Gods, or enjoyment or prosperity of beauty, or noble birth or fame, nor for fear of hell or birth among the brute creation that virtue is to be practiced, but it is for the purpose of the acquirement of the means leading to Buddhahood, to *Nirvāṇa*, whereby all sentient beings may be made happy and may be benefited."³¹ In regard to present global scenario, it is important that the present system should be linked with the ethical norms of Bodhisattva Ideal. We need change in the present system whether it is economic, political or cultural system that can combine with real understanding, wisdom and compassion with materialism, and then only our world will become pleasurable. According to Śāntideva, there have been countless *Bodhisattvas* who have vowed to save the countless numbers of sentient beings, and yet there is no end of suffering from the world. He explains that it is so because all these originate only from mind. So he asserts that if we restrain our minds then all sorts of problems material or spiritual can be solved. It means whatever we perform that should be done properly and wisely. He stresses for practical applications of teachings of Bodhisattva ideal in our way of life. Only verbal teaching is not sufficient in removing the wretched state of beings, as merely by reading the text of medical science, patient can not be cured.³² Mental, verbal and physical, all actions are required equally, but mental act is the most important of all.

30. सर्वत्यागश्च निर्वाणं निर्वाणार्थिं च मे मनः । त्यक्तव्यं चेन्मया सर्वं वरं सत्त्वेषु दीयताम् ॥11॥

यश्चासुखीकृतश्चात्मा मयायं सर्वदेहिनाम् । घ्नन्तु निन्दन्तु वा नित्यमाकिन्तु च पांसुभिः ॥12॥ बोधिचर्यावतार-3/11-12

31. नात्महेतोः शीलं रक्षति न स्वर्गहेतोः, न शक्रताहेतोः, न निरयभयभीतः, न तिर्यग्योनिभयभीतः ।

अन्यत्र बुद्धनेत्रो प्रतिष्ठापनाय यावत् सर्वसत्त्वहितसुखयोगक्षेमार्थिकः रक्षति ॥

Buddhistic Thought, Yamakami See, Systems of Sogen, University of Calcutta, 1912, pp.56, 57.

32. कायेनैव पठिष्यामि वाक्पाठेन तु किं भवेत् । चिकित्सापाठमात्रेण रोगिणः किं भविष्यति ॥ बोधिचर्यावतार-5/109